UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/CONF.164/L.30
27 July 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND
HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS
New York, 12-30 July 1993

# SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COOPERATION AND CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS: CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(Proposal submitted by: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu)

1. The sponsors endorse the principles specifying the basis for conducting marine research set out in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Regionally, our fisheries data collection and research activities are coordinated by the South Pacific Commission Tuna and Billfish Assessment Programme and collaborative research is also implemented through other regional consultative arrangements. This research includes input by scientists from distant-water fishing nations and integrates studies by regional organizations and by coastal States. We have been especially active in collaborative scientific research because we recognize the essential role research plays in the conservation and management of living marine resources.

2. The sponsors consider that to give full effect to the requirements for States to conserve and manage straddling and highly migratory fish stocks, States must cooperate in carrying out research throughout the range of those stocks. This scale of research is, we consider, beyond the capacity of any State acting on its own and therefore can best be realized through collaborative research coordinated by regional and subregional organizations or arrangements involving all interested parties. The sponsors strongly support this approach to research on these stocks because in their experience these mechanisms have provided for effective and efficient research cooperation.

3. Effective conservation and management of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks requires scientific research in the following areas:

(a) Stock assessment: surveys and catch/effort data analysis to estimate abundance indices, stock identification studies, estimates of productivity, research to develop new assessment methodologies;

(b) Fisheries interactions: tagging studies, catch/effort analyses, research into new analytical techniques;

(c) Biology and ecology: studies of age, growth, mortality, reproduction, recruitment, distribution, interrelationships with dependent and associated species, and oceanographic and climatic effects on stocks;

(d) Impacts on associated and dependent species (including non-fish species): estimates of incidental mortality of species caught in various target fisheries, population studies of non-target species, research into methods of minimizing impacts of fishing on non-target species.

4. States should be mindful that the resources available and research capacity of developing countries may not be equivalent to that of distant-water fishing nations. Therefore, in giving effect to scientific research cooperation, States should be mindful of the likely need for assistance to developing countries to build national and regional research capacity, including strengthening of national research capabilities. States should promote the full participation of developing countries in research planning and implementation in order to ensure that conservation and management measures developed for straddling and highly migratory fish stocks are effective and gain the widest acceptance possible. Adequate consideration should therefore be given to requirements for technical and financial assistance and training.

5. The sponsors consider that scientific research in support of conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and of highly migratory fish stocks should encompass the entire range of the stock(s) and be based on cooperative programmes coordinated by regional or subregional fisheries organizations or arrangements. The sponsors therefore believe that the Conference should:

(a) Elaborate the obligations for scientific cooperation on the high seas;

(b) Seek the commitment of the international community, especially those States with an interest in a region, fully to support cooperative scientific research coordinated through regional or subregional organizations or arrangements;

(c) Seek the commitment of the international community, especially those States fishing on the high seas in a region, to support the implementation of cooperative scientific research in the areas of stock assessment, fisheries interactions, biology and ecology of target species, and impacts on associated and dependent species (including non-fish species) as outlined above.

---